IN THE SPECIFICATION:

On page 1, prior to line 5, please insert the following headings and paragraph:

--Cross Reference to Related Applications

This application is for entry into the U.S. national phase under §371 for International Application No. PCT/IB02/001228 having an international filing date of April 22, 2002, and from which priority is claimed under all applicable sections of Title 35 of the United States Code including, but not limited to, Sections 120, 363 and 365(c).

Technical Field--

On page 1, prior to line 10, please insert the following heading:

--Background of the Invention--

On page 1, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 18 as follows:

-- Therefore, the need for low bit rate speech coding technology (codec and corresponding coder) is of great importance. Of course, the speech coding technology and the related audio coding technology is not limited to communication systems, ~~provided that~~ providing a wide variety of applications in multimedia applications and storage systems implement speech and audio coding techniques (codec) for analyzing and synthesizing of speech and audio, respectively. The implementation of speech and audio coding techniques within these applications and systems are driven not only by the needs of saving storage capacity, but also by the needs of transmitting bandwidth equal to the spectral efficiency. Commonly, the quality of the synthesized signals has to be maintained on a high level.--

On page 2, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 6 as follows:

--In waveform matching coders, as the name implies, the original speech waveform is matched as closely as possible by using appropriate error criteria. The most prominent

waveform matching codec is the code excited linear prediction (CELP). Typically, good speech quality has been achieved with waveform coders at bit rates approximately above 5 kbits/s. For example the enhanced full rate speech codec (EFR) according to the IS-641 standard approved in 1996 for the ~~north american~~ North American TDMA digital cellular system (IS-136) is based on an ACELP (algebraic code excited linear prediction) codec, which is an improved code excited linear prediction (CELP) codec and provides a speech coding at a bit rate of 7.4 kbits/s.--

On page 3, prior to line 12, please insert the following heading:

--Summary of the Invention--

On page 7, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 1 as follows:

--According to an embodiment of the invention, the difference between the identified pulse positions and the positions defined by using a default phase contour for the waveform frame may be also used to obtain and evaluate a pitch estimate of the pitch value, respectively. This default phase contour may be determined based on the phase of the parametric frame and assuming the pitch contour to be fixed or linear. In this case, the pitch value of the parametric frame coded before the analysis frame may be used to define the previous pitch value and hence estimate a valid pitch value. The pulse positions may be derived from the phase contour simply by detecting the indexes where the phase value achieves a value being a multiple of 2π .--

On page 10, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 11 as follows:

--According to an embodiment of the invention, the network device ~~comprise~~ comprises an analyzing unit which is additionally able to operate the method for providing at least one phase-characterizing parameter for coding a frame according to a parametric speech coding with respect to an embodiment of the present invention.--

On page 11 prior to line 7, please insert the following heading:

--Brief Description of the Drawings--

On page 11, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 10 as follows:

--Fig. 3   shows a graph comprising three curves, where a first curve depicts [[curve]] an original linear prediction (LP) residual signal, a second curve depicts a reconstructed signal according to the state of the art and a third curve depicts a reconstructed signal in accordance to an embodiment of the method of the invention,--

On page 11, prior to line 25, please insert the following heading:

--Detailed Description--

On page 16, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 7 as follows:

--The following description will present embodiments according to the method for providing at least one phase-characterizing parameter for coding a frame to be coded according to a parametric speech coding with respect to the invention. The presented embodiments are able to overcome misalignment problems like those described above. The basic idea of the method for providing at least one phase-characterizing parameter according to the invention will be described in combination with Fig. 2.--

On page 11, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 20 as follows:

--In an operative step S100, the method for providing at least one phase-characterizing parameter for providing at least one phase-characterizing parameter for coding or for decoding a frame according to a parametric speech coding is started, respectively. ~~The both~~ Both frames are succeeding frames and the method for providing at least one phase-characterizing parameter may provide particularly a phase characteristic or a phase estimate, respectively, which will be employed as an initial phase characteristic or an initial phase estimate, respectively, for coding the parametric frame. The analysis frame may be

coded according to, but is not limited to, the CELP method presented and described above.—

On page 16, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 29 as follows:

--In an operative step S101, information [[are]] is obtained from the analysis frame. The information [[are]] is characteristic information of the signal within the analysis frame.--

On page 21, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 22 as follows:

--Fig. 3 shows a graph comprising three curves, where a first curve depicts [[curve]] an original linear prediction (LP) residual signal, a second curve depicts a reconstructed signal according to the state of the art and a third curve depicts a reconstructed signal in accordance to an embodiment of the method of the invention.--